



# 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT FUND FAQ

## 1. What is the 21st Century Technology and Equipment Fund?

Established by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE)'s School Building Authority (SBA), the 21st Century Technology and Equipment Fund is a statewide initiative that will infuse \$15 million in state dollars directly into classrooms to support teaching and learning. Through the initiative, local education agencies (LEAs) will have the opportunity to invest in innovative technology and equipment that foster a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) project-based learning (PBL) approach and career and technical education (CTE) pathways to ensure all students have access to high-quality learning spaces.

## 2. Why is RIDE investing in this?

High-quality learning spaces are foundational to promoting excellence in learning for every child in every public school, regardless of its zip code. From collaborative desks to digital smartboards, virtual reality tools to makerspace, 21st century learning spaces promote creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration. These targeted investments will offer an immediate transformative effect to thousands of Rhode Island students.

## 3. Who is eligible and how is distribution determined?

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) across the state, including district and charter school systems, will be eligible for funding on a per-student basis, with a minimum award of \$25,000 ([see distribution list here](#)). Historically underserved LEAs will receive additional funding through the "equity boost" tool. A "CTE Boost" is also available. Both distribution tools are described in answers #5 and #6.

## 4. What is the funding source?

The 21st Century Technology and Equipment Fund leverages \$1 million in existing CTE categorical funding (Program Equipment Fund) with \$14 million in SBA Capital Funds.



## 5. What is the 'Equity Boost' tool?

To help remove barriers and meet the needs of all learners, the distribution uses a new “Equity Boost” tool to provide additional funding to communities where it is needed most. This includes Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, Woonsocket, and West Warwick.

## 6. What is the 'CTE Boost' tool?

To further the state’s commitment for career development, the CTE categorical funds provide a “CTE Boost,” or additional funding, to the 9 local education agencies (LEAs) that qualify. This includes Chariho, Coventry, Cranston, Davies, East Providence, Newport, Providence, Warwick, and Woonsocket.

## 7. Through what process will LEAs receive the funding?

Memorandums of agreement will be sent to LEA leaders in November. MOAs must be signed by respective school committees or governing agencies and returned to [SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov](mailto:SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov).

## 8. What can LEAs spend funding on?

LEAs are required to invest in technology and equipment that promote STEM project-based learning and CTE pathways. Examples of targeted investments include, but are not limited to: collaborative desks, flexible seating, digital interactive smartboards, classroom and lab A/V equipment, remote conferencing equipment, and career-tech training equipment and simulators. Investments should support student-centric education, enrichment and acceleration of learning.

## 9. Can funding be allocated towards salaries?

No.

## 10. Who is determining how grants are spent?

LEAs are best equipped to determine what their programmatic needs are and what technologies will meet those needs most effectively.

## 11. What is the spending timeline?

All funds must be used by June 30, 2023, though delivery of items may occur after the deadline. RIDE understands supply chain issues may impact delivery.

## 12. Are there forms LEAs need to submit?

Yes. Invoices and progress payment request forms can be submitted to [SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov](mailto:SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov). [View forms here.](#)



## 13. How will LEA investments be monitored?

Similar to the SBA Capital Fund and PayGo request process, LEAs submit their invoices to RIDE for review and payment. The SBA will work with LEAs should they have any concerns.

## 14. Who did RIDE include in the planning process of this initiative?

RIDE worked with the Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to develop the 'Equity Boost' distribution tool.

## 15. How can the public learn about investments being made through the 21st Century Technology and Equipment Fund in their schools?

RIDE is asking LEAs to share before and after photos of their investments and plans to publish a report highlighting projects statewide after the investments are made. RIDE encourages LEAs to document learning environment transformations on their websites, social media, newsletters and other methods of communication. Tag [@RIDeptEd](https://twitter.com/RIDeptEd)!

## QUESTIONS?

For further questions, please contact the School Building Authority at [SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov](mailto:SBATechAssist@ride.ri.gov).

[www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov)